



1997-98 KIRIS ASSESSMENT

Open-Response Item Scoring Worksheet

Grade 5—Social Studies Question 11

The **academic expectation** addressed by “Voting and Responsibility” (Question 11) is

2.15 Students can accurately describe various forms of government and analyze issues that relate to the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

The **core content** assessed by this item includes

- All citizens of the United States have certain rights and responsibilities as members of a democratic society.
- In order for a democratic form of government to function, citizens must play an active role (e.g., government by the people, for the people).

Voting and Responsibility

Although there is no law that requires citizens of the United States to vote, many Americans consider the right to vote important.

- a. Explain why it is important for citizens to vote.
- b. What are TWO ways voters can learn more about people running for office so that the voters can make good decisions?



SCORING GUIDE

Grade 5 Social Studies

Score	Description
4	Student gives thorough answers to both parts of the question. Discussion notes that voting is an important responsibility of citizens because elected officials represent the voters and make important decisions that can affect them. Student offers two appropriate suggestions for learning what candidates stand for.
3	Student answers both parts of the question, but response demonstrates a general understanding of the importance of voting. The response infers that elected officials represent the people and make important decisions that affect them. Student offers two appropriate suggestions for learning what candidates stand for.
2	Student answers both parts of the question, but one or both parts are limited. OR Student generally answers part a only.
1	Student shows only a minimal understanding of the responsibility of voters and/or how to find out what candidates stand for. OR Student answers part b only.
0	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
Blank	No response.

Possible explanations for importance of voting:

- Elected officials make important decisions
- Elected officials represent the people

Ways of finding out what a candidate stands for:

- Read candidates' brochures
- Attend meetings with the candidates
- Ask questions of candidates
- Listen to and read advertisements about the candidates
- Watch debates held by candidates
- Go to campaign headquarters and ask questions
- Internet/computer



ANNOTATED STUDENT RESPONSE

Grade 5 Social Studies

Sample 4-Point Response of Student Work

Student Response

(A) It is important for people to vote because they have a say. They also have been given the power to choose the president. The decision is something that will affect the whole country. And if you don't vote and somebody you don't like you can't complain.

(B) Ways that people can learn more about people running for office are by going to the campaigns. Other way are watching them on TV. You can watch the news to see what they doing etc.

You can also participate in things the president's promoting like parades, bands, or speeches at zoos or stuff like that.

Student identifies two appropriate ways that citizens can learn about candidates' positions and activities (i.e., through campaigns and the television news).

Student explains why it is important for citizens to vote. Explanation clearly conveys the notion of representation (i.e., people "have a say") and suggests that the president makes decisions that "will affect the whole country."

Overall, student demonstrates a strong understanding of civic responsibility and representation. Student clearly explains why it is important for citizens to vote, and correctly identifies two ways that voters can learn about candidates' positions and activities.



ANNOTATED STUDENT RESPONSE

Grade 5 Social Studies

Sample 3-Point Response of Student Work

Student Response

A. It is important for citizens to vote. Without their vote, their opinion would not be stated. Their opinion is important because it ensures that even if their vote didn't win, their opinion was noticed, and was included.

B. Voters need to know a lot about who is running for an office, and who they are voting for. A few ways they can do this is to interview, read, converse, or watch T.V. updates or campaigns. (if possible)

← Student generally explains why it is important for citizens to vote. Explanation implies the notion of representation but does not address the concept that elected officials make important decisions.

← Student identifies several appropriate strategies for obtaining information about candidates for office (e.g., “read, converse, or watch T.V. updates”).



ANNOTATED STUDENT RESPONSE

Grade 5 Social Studies

Sample 2-Point Response of Student Work

Student Response

A.) It is important for a citizen to vote because Everybody has a right to speak freely about who they want elected.

Further, it is up to the people and the citizines about who gets elected. Also, I ts a free country and if the person who got elected and the people didn't get vote, the citizines are going to be dicipointed.

I n conclusion, everyone should have the right to vote, and speak freely about who they want elected. I have listed some important facts why.

B.) Two or more ways voters can learn more about who is running for office so that voters can make a disision is by listening or seeing what they are going to do when they get elected or re elected. Also, people should watch campains more offen to see what they can do for you if they get elected.

Moreover, What the kind of person she or he is. What party are they, for example a democrat or a replubican.

← Student gives a limited explanation why it is important for citizens to vote. Explanation suggests a limited awareness of civic representation (i.e., “everybody has a right to speak freely about who they want elected”) but does not address the concept that elected officials make important decisions.

← Student identifies two appropriate ways that citizens can learn about candidates’ positions and activities (i.e., “listening” to candidates, “watch campains”).



ANNOTATED STUDENT RESPONSE

Grade 5 Social Studies

Sample 1-Point Response of Student Work

Student Response

A. I think it is important for citizens to vote because if we didn't we could get someone that would be mean, and he might try to rule the country.

B. Two more ways people can learn about running because they wouldn't want to pick somebody that could ruin you life. They might be good but I the the citizens should vote.

← Student provides a minimal explanation of why it is important for citizens to vote. Explanation makes no reference to civic representation or important decisions made by elected officials.

← Student attempts to identify two ways that voters can learn more about candidates but the response does not make sense.



INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Grade 5 Social Studies

The open-response item “Voting and Responsibility” was designed to assess (1) students’ understanding of civic rights and responsibilities in a democracy, and (2) students’ understanding that in order for a democratic form of government to function, citizens must play an active role. The instructional strategies below present ideas for helping students explore and master these concepts.

Have students work individually, in pairs, and/or in small groups to complete any or all of the following activities:

- Campaign for a class office (e.g., class president, class secretary) by creating posters and slogans and giving speeches.
- Participate in an election of class officers.
- Write to local, elected officials to inquire about their role and responsibilities.
- Participate in an experiment in which one student gets to set the rules for a day. On the next day, discuss the results of the experiment and discuss the difference between a democratically-elected government and a dictatorship.
- Participate in frequent voting about a variety of activities or issues important to the class. Discuss the differences between simple majority rule, two-thirds majority rule, etc.
- Read and talk about the Mayflower Compact. Discuss majority rule.